GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:940
ANSWERED ON:02.03.2016
Non-Operational Towers
Patil Shri A.T. (Nana)

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited towers have been installed in many parts of the country especially in the Jalgaon Parliamentary constituency in Maharashtra and almost most of them are lying defunct to which network problem is being faced;

(b) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to see to these non-operational towers especially in Jalgaon district;

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to make BSNL and MTNL more modern; and

(d) the steps being taken by the Government to address the problem of call drop in the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) & (b) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has installed Base Transceiver Stations (BTSs) in the country including Jalgaon Secondary Switching Area (SSA). BSNL has reported that no network problem is reported. In Jalgaon SSA, 9 out of 252 BTSs are non-operational. These towers are located in remote areas. There is frequent theft problem in the area resulting in loss of RF cable, Battery sets, etc. However, BSNL has allotted 72 Network Cards & 69 Battery Sets to Jalgaon SSA for carrying out repairs to the non-operational mobile towers.

(c) So far as modernisation of telecom network is concerned, BSNL and MTNL upgrade and augment their networks on techno-economical considerations on a continuous basis. BSNL and MTNL have taken several steps to for the modernisation of their telecom network and improving upon quality of service. Some of these steps are as follows:

BSNL

â€¢ BSNL has planned to install 10510 of 3G Base Transceiver Stations (BTSs) & 14232 of 2G BTSs under Phase-VII GSM (Global System for Mobile communication) expansion for 15 Million lines. It has also planned to install additional 9600 of 3G BTSs and replacing of 5300 old BTSs of GSM Phase I, II & III in North & South Zone. An approximate capacity of 5 million shall be added in the GSM network of North Zone & South Zone. BSNL has already commissioned over 16.42 million lines. Out of the planned BTSs, 9829 (3G) BTSs & 12,491 (2G) BTSs are radiating (Total 22,320). This will improve 2G & 3G network coverage & data capability of 3G network.
â€¢ BSNL has planned to implement ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) as one of the important IT initiative in two phases i.e. Phase-I Proof of Concept (POC) and Phase-2 Rollout. The ERP has been implemented in all the 49 units including eight Proof of Concept (POC) Circles .
â€¢ During this Five Year Plan (2012-17), BSNL has planned to make the entire wire line customer base network IP enabled. Next Generation Network (NGN) equipment based on the latest architecture are planned to be deployed gradually to replace the entire Circuit Switched equipments/ Digital Telephone Exchanges.
â€¢ BSNL has set wireline call centres for the customers of landline and broadband at Dehradun, Ajmer and Bangalore and traffic from all circles has been migrated to these call centres. These call centres are accessible through toll free number 1500 (from BSNL number) and 18003451500 (from other operator numbers).
â€¢ BSNL has launched various customer centric initiatives like Night free calling, Free Roaming, increased minimum speed of broadband to 2 Mbps etc.

MTNL

â€¢ MTNL has planned to upgrade the existing High Speed Downlink Packet Access (HSDPA) 3G network supporting Downlink speed of 3.6 Mbps & Uplink speed of 384 Kbps to HSPA+ (High Speed Packet Access +) with Downlink speed of 21.1 Mbps & Uplink speed of 5.76 Mbps per sector.
â€¢ MTNL is taking steps for up-gradation / augmentation / expansion of existing 2G/3G network.
â€¢ MTNL is planning to provide the backhaul media connectivity of existing mobile tower sites in Delhi & Mumbai on OFC network in place of Microwave network.
â€¢ MTNL is also exploring synergy with BSNL for its mobile services amongst other initiatives.
â€¢ MTNL has set up wireline call centers for the customers of landline, mobile & broadband at Delhi and Mumbai. These call centers are accessible through Toll Free numbers 1500/1503/1504 (from MTNL numbers). These call centres handle all types of inbound queries, directory enquiries, complaints, requests, outbound calling and response through SMS (Short Message service)/e-mail/fax/web portal.

(d) Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) and the Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) have taken several steps to address the problem of call drop in the country. Some of these steps are as follows:

â€¢ DoT communicated to Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD) and various state Governments citing "Digital India" and "m-governance" programs for providing single window clearances, space in government buildings for mobile sites, speedy right of Way (RoW) clearances and ensuring 24x7 power.
â€¢ Secretary (T) held a meeting with Secretary, MoUD on 22nd July, 2015 and the follow-up communications, the latest one on 17th February, 2016 to facilitate the use of Government land & buildings for installation of additional tower-sites (around 100 sites) in Delhi Area. Each of these sites may be shared by multiple Telecom Service Providers.
â€¢ Permission granted by the DoT for active infrastructure sharing spectrum sharing and trading.
â€¢ 19363 of 2G and 44,450 of 3G additional sites have been installed in the last six months
â€¢ Network optimization have been also under taken by TSPs.
â€¢ TRAI's Independent Drive Tests (IDT) by Independent Agencies in several cities of India on periodic basis, the latest one conducted in December 2015-January 2016 for 7 major cities.
â€¢ Weekly monitoring of status of bad (radio) cells.
â€¢ Awareness Campaign by DoT and TRAI to dispel the fear of potential harmful effect of EMF (Electro Magnetic Field) radiations amongst general public and mobile users.

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